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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ISTANBUL 000038

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: TU BO MD KCRM PGOV BO MD KCRM PGOV KJUS

SUBJECT: ISTANBUL POLICE ON TIP AND MURDER OF BELARUSIAN WOMAN

REF: A. MINSK 1721

B. ANKARA 6865

C. CHISINAU 1399

¶1. (SBU) Summary: On December 27, poloff met with Osman Kaplan, Deputy Director of the Foreigners Unit of the Istanbul Police Department, to follow up on trafficking in persons issues raised during the visit of a Moldavan anti-TIP government delegation (ref B) and the murder of a Belarusian woman in Istanbul (ref c). Kaplan said there is a growing awareness about the TIP problem in Turkey, and that in November five traffickers were apprehended in Istanbul, of whom three are in jail. He shared documents about the Belarusian case; four men have been arrested and jailed in connection with the death. Kaplan clarified the different situations of women described as trafficked; some come voluntarily, and some are tricked; many are unwilling to testify against traffickers. Kaplan complained that the Moldovan delegation accused the Turkish Police of cooperating with the traffickers, increasing tension in the meeting. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Poloff and pol specialist met December 27 with Osman Kaplan, Deputy Director of the Foreigners Unit of the Istanbul Police Department, to follow up on trafficking in persons issues raised during the visit of a Moldavan anti-TIP government delegation (ref B) and the murder of a Belarusian woman in Istanbul in the fall. Kaplan underlined that he was unable to provide information to U.S. diplomats in Istanbul on cases involving nationals from third countries -- such as Moldova or Belarus -- without official permission from the Ankara Headquarters of the Foreigners Unit. However, Kaplan shared information both about the growing TIP problem in Turkey and the Belarusian case.

¶3. (SBU) Kaplan said there is a growing awareness about the TIP problem in Turkey, adding that more serious measures have been taken to address TIP after the 2002 amendment to the Turkish Penal Code, which specified the definition of human trafficking. As an example, Kaplan confirmed that in November 2004 five traffickers were apprehended and sent to court; three of the traffickers are already in jail.

¶4. (SBU) Kaplan stressed that women who may come under the definition of trafficked come to Turkey for many different reasons. Some come voluntarily to make money; a woman, for example, can make USD 100 a night in Istanbul, versus USD 30-50 a month in Moldova or Belarus. Another group of women are cheated by traffickers. He gave an example of a Moldovan woman who came to Turkey years ago and married a Turkish man; she is now a Turkish citizen. She frequently travels to Moldova to recruit young women by promising them various jobs, such as dancing or babysitting, and forces them into prostitution once they are in Turkey. Kaplan noted that the women are fearful of being sold. He added that the Istanbul police have found that in most cases, the women are often unwilling to testify against the traffickers both because they are afraid of reprisal, and because they want to be able to return to Turkey.

¶5. (SBU) On the murder of the Belarusian woman, Kaplan showed copies both of the police report and a November 3 article describing the case, in which a 27-year old Belarusian woman, Vera Krivenia, was tricked into coming to Istanbul by two Turkish men with promise of a job. The two men took her passport, locked her in a house in Bakirkoy and forced her into prostitution. According to the documentation Kaplan shared, Krivenia and another Russian woman were then sent to the apartment of two businessmen, where she committed suicide by throwing herself out of the sixth-floor bathroom window in order to avoid being a prostitute. Kaplan confirmed that the police arrested and sent to prison four Turkish men in connection with Krivenia's death: the two men who brought Krivenia to Turkey to force her into prostitution, and the two businessmen.

¶6. (SBU) Turning to the November meeting of the Moldovan TIP delegation with the Istanbul police (ref c), Kaplan complained about the attitude of the Moldovan authorities, calling their approach unprofessional. Kaplan claimed that the Moldovan delegation accused the Turkish Police of cooperating with the traffickers, increasing tension in the meeting. He had to warn the interpreter not to interpret all

the statements of the Moldovans, in order to prevent the Foreigners Unit director from leaving the meeting. Kaplan added that the GOT has problems with the Moldovans entering the country. For example, it is easy to change passports and names in Moldova, making it very easy for a Moldovan to return to Turkey even though his or her entry is banned.

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SUBJECT: ISTANBUL POLICE ON TP AND MURDER OF BELARUSIAN

¶7. (SBU) Kalan complained about the heavy work load and lack of resources, both personnel and financial in the Foreigners' Unit, where the range of issues includes work permits to illegal immigrants, TP, and visa violations. Kaplan stated that in November, 1000 foreigners were deported from Istanbul. He believes that a separate Immigration Office is needed to ease the burden on the Foreigners' Unit.

¶8. (SBU) Bio Note: Kaplan, who graduated from the Ankara Police Academy in 1991, spent a year in the U.S., on an exchange program in the District of Columbia and Virginia police stations. He served in the Ankara police bureau from 1992-95, then transferred to Istanbul, where he is deputy head of the Foreigners' Unit. Kaplan has also worked in UN teams in Bosnia and Kosovo, and is comfortable with English.

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